United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

27thth PLENARY MEETING

Tuesday, 12 October 1993
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. CARDOSO (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to offer you my warmest congratulations on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Your presence at the head of this Assembly clearly attests to the commitment of your country - Guyana - to the defence of peace and the promotion of multilateral diplomacy. Your skills and your experience on the international scene, acquired over many years, will, we are certain, ensure the successful conclusion of our deliberations. My country, Guinea-Bissau, wishes to assure you of our fullest readiness to cooperate with you.

Our congratulations and thanks go to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the remarkable and constructive job he did in steering the work of the forty-seventh session. We wish also to express our gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for the way in which he is directing the work of the Organization in this new context.

We hail the advent of new Members to the great family of the United Nations: Andorra, Monaco, Eritrea, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

I am particularly honoured to have the privilege of speaking on behalf of my country, Guinea-Bissau, at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly at a time when an increased worldwide consensus seems to be emerging, in that significant and encouraging changes are taking place in the global political and economic landscape.

How many questions, expectations and, indeed, how much skepticism underlie that assertion?

The end of the bipolar domination of international relations and the cessation of the cold war, which affected all continents, constitute an event that is of manifest political significance and of great historical impact - first, because it has led to the dismantling of an international order that prevailed for half a century and divided the world into hostile blocs; secondly, because it has cleared a space for the development of certain processes whose free evolution was impeded because of the political discipline imposed, within each bloc, by the demands of the conflicts between the two super-Powers.

The world power pattern has changed. This has led to a shift in certain countries' relative positions in the economic and political hierarchy. The very nature of the relations between these countries is changing. However, the rules and practices that will constitute the basis of the new international order have not yet been defined.

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

93-86855 (E)

Distr. GENERAL

A/48/PV.27
3 November 1993

ENGLISH

As happens in periods of history marked by great changes - especially unpredictable changes - we are now witnessing the emergence of factors that give rise to both integration and disintegration, to the order and disorder that are alternating in international behaviour and in the conduct of international affairs. The new and old orders are fighting for primacy in the development of an international system, and it is no longer easy to distinguish between the past and the future.

The new international context gives rise to considerable anxiety, especially as it poses several questions that have not yet been answered. For example, it is not clear how political hegemony can be exercised in a system that has become multipolar; strong tendencies towards globalization and towards regionalization are emerging on the international scene, and one wonders how these can be reconciled; the nation State's decision-making capacity is limited by transnational players, and its prerogatives of sovereignty are being ceded in order that it may be incorporated into broader political and economic entities, even as ancient ethnic groups are claiming the right to be regarded as nation States; one sees increasing capitalist competition in a situation in which economic interdependence imposes new parameters for the settlement of conflicts of interest; one is witnessing a world-wide heightening of awareness of the responsibility of us all with regard to ecological matters, and, at the same time, one has to deal with the means of sharing responsibility between the various countries.

This is hardly an exhaustive list, but it is sufficient to demonstrate the extent to which the international agenda is being broadened and made more complicated. The future of many countries will depend on the items on that agenda and on our capacity to organize our approach to them.

Given this situation, it is absolutely vital that the closest possible contact between nations be maintained by means of the exchange of information, joint thinking and discussion, so that awareness of the changes that are under way and of their possible impact on a continent such as Africa may be deepened.

At the beginning of my statement, I mentioned the emergence of a universal consensus that has stemmed form the changes in the international system. The wide prospects that have opened up, in terms of the peaceful settlement of conflicts and the elimination of tension in regions such as southern Africa, western Africa, the Maghreb, Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Asia, lead us to believe that this process, which is marked by the strong resolve of the international community to achieve lasting peace, will not turn out to be a short-term symptom of a world in upheaval.

The situation prevailing in Angola is still a matter of major concern to Guinea-Bissau. My Government welcomes the unanimous adoption, by the Security Council of the United Nations, of resolution 864 (1993), which is a logical follow-up to earlier resolutions that aim at the restoration of peace to Angola. We are convinced that only dialogue can lead to a lasting solution that will result in the return of peace to that country. The parties to the conflict should comply in full with the obligations resulting from the agreements that have been signed and from the Security Council resolutions. This is the only possible way to end the suffering of the Angolan people and to respond to their legitimate desire for peace and democracy.

With regard to Mozambique, we should like to express our concern at the slowness with which the Peace Agreement is being implemented. We encourage the parties concerned to continue their efforts to strengthen peace and national unity. Further, we exhort the international community to continue its support for that process.

In South Africa, the abolition of the legislative pillars of apartheid is a positive step. It is now important that the last obstacles, including those caused by the climate of violence, be removed to make possible negotiations towards the creation of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. We have welcomed with satisfaction President Nelson Mandela's appeal concerning the lifting of sanctions against South Africa.

The tragedy that, daily, besets the Somali people gives us reason for great anxiety. We urge all the parties concerned to end the hostilities and to commit themselves to negotiation. We are convinced that the peace-keeping activities in Somalia, within the framework of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNISOM II), should, above all, serve the interests of the Somali people and strengthen the fragile process of national reconciliation that is under way.

We happily welcome the positive developments in Liberia - in particular, the signing, at Cotonou, of the Peace Agreement, including the provision for the establishment of a central transitional Government. However, we regret the widespread adverse effects the Liberian war has had on the territory of neighbouring countries. We express the hope that all the protagonists on

the Liberian political scene will persevere in the consolidation of peace by making every effort towards reconstruction of their country.

In the Maghreb, the constructive position taken by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front makes it possible to be optimistic about developments in the situation in Western Sahara and about the prospects for organizing a referendum under United Nations auspices.

Guinea-Bissau watches with concern the conflict that is laying waste the territory of the former Yugoslavia. We believe that only an agreement acceptable to all parties involved in the conflict will put an end to this bloody episode. My Government regrets that the latest Geneva talks on peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not yield the expected results. We hope that the parties will adopt more flexible positions with a view to bringing about the signing of a peace agreement.

Guinea-Bissau believes that the solution to this fratricidal conflict must be sought by peaceful means. That is why we continue to support the United Nations and the European Community's negotiating effort and welcome the Security Council's adoption of resolution 827 (1993) on the establishment of an International Tribunal.

In the case of East Timor, we urge the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned aimed at finding a peaceful, negotiated solution to this issue.

In the Middle East, peace is now possible thanks to the *rapprochement* between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. We greet the Washington agreement with satisfaction and renewed hope. We encourage the parties to continue negotiations with a view to establishing a lasting peace throughout the region.

The reunification of China is in essence the sole concern of the Chinese people. In our opinion, the international community should turn its attention to the need to recognize the fundamental rights of the 21 million inhabitants of the Republic of China.

The poverty and social injustice that are the sorry lot of a large portion of humankind are amongst the underlying causes of the conflicts that constantly threaten the world's peace and stability. The ideological tensions of the cold war seem likely to be replaced by new tensions, this time economic in origin, if adequate precautions are not taken. The United Nations must of course strengthen its structure for maintaining world peace and security, but it must also play a leading role in helping to build a stable economic system and promoting the development of the developing countries, particularly that of the least developed countries. This is without question the best and most effective form of preventive diplomacy.

The economic situation in Africa is becoming more and more worrying. Today, on the eve of the twenty-first century, incomes in sub-Saharan Africa average $490 per person per year, in other words, they are the lowest in the world. The average figure masks great disparities between countries: Africa is the only region in the world where the number of people living in poverty is likely to increase markedly before the year 2000. Trends in the world economy lead us to predict that the situation will get worse.

Black Africa's share of world trade has plummeted from 3.8 per cent in 1970 to 1 per cent now, which has entailed Africa's being relegated to the sidelines in international relations. Despite plentiful labour and investment opportunities, direct investment from the most industrialized countries is in flight from the least developed countries towards the advanced economies. Sub-Saharan Africa receives about 6 per cent of direct investment, which is profitable essentially for those few countries with oil and/or strategically important minerals.

Restrictions on international trade as a result of various protectionist practices and of subsidy policies for the industrialized countries' agricultural products are imposing severe limitations on the underdeveloped countries' export opportunities. In this regard, can we hope that the Uruguay Round negotiations, if they succeed, will spare humankind the possible unpleasant aftermath of discriminatory practices on the part of the trading blocs?

We wish to make an appeal that the next round of negotiations be planned to have all the relevance that the situation requires. In the meanwhile, it is painful for us to see how those who recommend to us that we should liberalize trade if we want to get our economies moving again can, in the blink of an eye, become fervent defenders of protectionism when they are convinced that they are defending their own interests that way. Liberal policies in the countries of the South have not a hope of succeeding unless the countries of the North systematically dismantle their protectionist barriers and open up their markets.

The transition to effective and lasting market economies requires further buttressing from the

international community. Most of the underdeveloped countries, particularly in Africa, have recognized the errors that were committed in their post-colonial economic management. They have therefore embarked, with the assistance of the international financial organizations and other partners abroad, on radical economic reforms aimed at laying the foundations for economic growth and development. Enormous political and social costs have had to be borne in carrying out these reforms, but the will to succeed is still there despite all the odds against it.

Unfortunately, these efforts have been overwhelmed by the massive reductions in financial assistance from the industrialized countries and the multilateral organizations. The target set by the United Nations for official development assistance (ODA), 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP), has scarcely been complied with at all. At the moment, only an infinitesimal fraction of ODA is being allocated to the poorest countries and even less than that to the priority sectors that are most likely to trigger development. ODA must be restructured if the problem of poverty and lasting development is to be tackled. We must take the risk and have faith in a renewed Africa with a new economic management mind-set.

Judging by the number of international conferences and meetings on Africa that are held each year and the feeble way they make available finance to root out the evils they deplore so much, we could be right in saying that we live in a real consumer society for intellectual products, that is. People are at last beginning to wake up to the fact that these international meetings, although they sometimes do succeed in making world public opinion aware of one or another aspect of underdevelopment, have not contributed very much at all towards eliminating the great scourge of underdevelopment itself.

Not only does the way economic and financial opportunities are being distributed throughout the world provide the less developed countries with piffling amounts of resources, even worse than that is the way colossal amounts are being clawed back from them, particularly through those notorious debt-servicing costs. Total debt as a percentage of GNP stands at over 100 per cent, and debt-servicing costs are over 20 per cent and even 50 per cent in some cases. As a result, several African countries are unable to maintain the infrastructures for production or the social services that are vital to development.

Traditional approaches to solving the debt problem, while they have granted some countries a few months' breathing space, would none the less appear to have exacerbated the problem, since Africa's debt burden has gone on growing, by about 10 per cent over the last decade. This is extremely worrying.

How can we allot more financial resources to developing our human resources, involving women in development and protecting the environment if at the same time the donors are mounting pressures to have the debt paid back, operate unfavourable trade policies and cut back their assistance? My country believes that major steps absolutely must be taken if we want the low-income countries not to miss the boat for economic modernization and development. The Trinidad conclusions, which propose canceling two thirds of the eligible debt coupled with a rescheduling of the remainder over 25 years and an additional five-year grace period, offer a promising and encouraging approach to easing the debt burden. However, the Trinidad conclusions should also be applied to multilateral debt, which now accounts for one third of debt servicing costs.

If our planet is to have lasting security, there must be a collective effort to combat the endogenous and exogenous factors that nowadays condemn the majority of the world's population to absolute poverty. If this poverty persists, its consequences will ultimately spill over borders in the form of migration, terrorism, drugs and crime of all kinds.

Africa's economy is worsening to such an extent that we must break with routine thinking and devise new instruments and methods in order to understand and properly respond to the needs of a continent which is economically in anguish. Unfortunately, it is clear that technological advances, which should contribute to improving the human lot everywhere, are actually creating an increasingly greater gulf between those who have mastered that technology and those who are trying to enter into the technological age. The development of science and technology ill-suited to our needs is contributing to a reduction in the demand for commodities and is consequently further worsening the terms of trade.

Given all these issues, does this Organization not have a role to play in mitigating the negative effects on the least-developed countries of the rapid globalization of production and sophisticated technological systems? This is the very foundation of the preventive diplomacy that the United Nations has advocated.

The prospects for development are also threatened by the staggering pace of the degradation of the environment. The degradation of natural resources and ecosystems poses a major threat to humankind.

For Africa, which still depends on natural resources for its survival, this situation involves grave consequences likely to hamper medium-term economic recovery programmes if urgent measures are not taken and the appropriate means mobilized. With national budgets already truncated, African countries will find it very difficult to face these challenges unaided in the absence of an increase in international assistance, properly programmed and managed so as to ensure the rational development and regulation of the environment.

The economic difficulties faced by most of the countries of the South have markedly diminished their ability to act together and in a coordinated manner. Domestic economic challenges, instead of promoting the mobilization of forces and resources in a regional or subregional context, often lead to a tendency by these countries to turn inward. This tendency has been compounded by structural adjustment programmes designed and executed in a strictly national context, with the aim of upgrading short-term indicators of macroeconomic and financial performance. The chances for sustainable development in the developing countries and particularly in the least-developed countries could be increased by strengthened programmes of regional and subregional integration and cooperation.

In this respect, we welcome the efforts of the European Economic Community, in the framework of the Lomé IV Convention, to lay the foundation for closer economic cooperation between the five Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa, despite the fact that they are not geographically contiguous. In this context, strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation with Portugal and Brazil will make it possible to develop a special kind of relationship between these countries, all of which use the Portuguese language.

It has now been clearly acknowledged that the active participation of peoples in political, economic and social life is an essential prerequisite for releasing creative energy and enriching cultural values and people's ability to take control of its own destiny. Mindful of this fact, Guinea-Bissau, like other countries of our continent, has opted for democracy as one of the means to mobilize its full human and physical potential in the struggle against underdevelopment. In this respect, the appropriate legal and institutional machinery has been established, with a view to promoting a political system based on consensus and the rule of the majority and on a transparent and effective public administration.

The democratic process, to be credible, must mesh with the socio-cultural heritage of a region or a country. Virtually everywhere in Africa, we are witnessing the emergence of new forces for change which are in the vanguard of democracy: civilian societies, especially free-association and cooperative movements; non-governmental organizations; and civic associations.

Despite some short-term obstacles, political pluralism in Guinea-Bissau is, without the shadow of a doubt, an irreversible process. One of its stages will culminate in the holding of the first multi-party elections, scheduled for 27 March 1994. To ensure the greatest possible transparency in these elections, the Government is taking all the steps necessary to prepare for them, with the support of its foreign partners. In this context, international observers will be invited to assist in the organization of the elections, and we look forward to receiving increased support from the international community at the appropriate time.

Sustained support for these new forces of change is absolutely vital if we wish to bolster new democracies and explicitly affirm our commitment to the protection of human rights.

The challenges facing the United Nations in terms of maintaining international peace and stability while at the same time promoting economic and social development in a rapidly changing world require that profound changes be made in its structure. These changes should take into account the interests of all the components. More than ever, international cooperation has become an opportunity to create lasting peace, to strengthen protection for the dignity of human beings everywhere, and to safeguard the rights, profound aspirations and well-being of present and future generations.

For its part, Guinea-Bissau, faithful to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and determined to make its contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, solemnly reaffirms its firm commitment to pursue this course. We are convinced that the task of maintaining international peace and security is a responsibility incumbent on the whole of the international community, on all countries large and small, in conformity with the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

It is against this backdrop that my country has presented its candidacy as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, and we ask all Member States to support us.

Guinea-Bissau is admittedly a small country, but its firm resolve to contribute to the attainment of the objectives of this Organization is widely known. Our presence at this time - in the framework of United Nations Missions - in Angola, Mozambique, Liberia, Cambodia, Haiti and in the former Yugoslavia, in both the civilian and the military spheres, is a clear illustration of this assertion.

Mr. YOUNG (St. Vincent and the Grenadines): Mr. President, the delegation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes your election to preside over the work of the General Assembly at this its forty-eighth session. By your elevation to this exceedingly demanding position, the General Assembly has acknowledged your well-known personal merits, proven ability and professional skills. I am confident that you will guide this session to a successful conclusion of the business before us.

Your country, Guyana, shares a number of common interests and affinities with St. Vincent and the Grenadines and other sister States in the Latin American and Caribbean region. It is therefore with a deep sense of pride that we congratulate you on your unanimous election and pledge the full cooperation of the delegation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines throughout the difficult and challenging period ahead.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines was pleased to be in the Chair in August 1992 when the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) unanimously endorsed the Caribbean candidature for the Presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. It was the first time that the Group had so acted, and I wish to congratulate all those who were involved in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) effort, and to thank all member states of the GRULAC for their cooperation. We in CARICOM are steadfast in our commitments, and this demonstration of hemispheric solidarity augurs well for continued strengthening of our ties, not only in placing candidates in important positions in the international arena, but even more critically in promoting and securing the best interests of our member countries in the post-cold-war world.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, former Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, for the able and inspired manner in which he guided the work of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session .

I wish also to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the extraordinary role he is playing in shaping the future of the international system.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes the representatives of the States newly admitted to membership of the United Nations, namely, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, the Principality of Monaco, and Andorra. We particularly wish to congratulate the people of Eritrea on winning the long battle for their self-determination, and we express the hope that their diligence in the pursuit of political independence will be combined with an appropriate strategy for economic achievement.

The admission of a nation to this body always marks a significant event in the international arena as it takes us another step forward towards the objective of universal representation.

Adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the right of the world's peoples to self-determination are the main barometers used in the admission of States to membership of this body of nations. However, the Republic of China on Taiwan, a nation of over 21 million inhabitants, which today has one of the most vigorous economies in the world, is excluded from membership of the United Nations. In this post-cold-war era, when a number of countries which once had a single identity and representation in this Organization now find ready admission as separate and sovereign members, it is appropriate that all States capable of maintaining such sovereign identity be so recognized. Moreover, the Republic of China on Taiwan has demonstrated its capacity to be in the forefront of world economic development and should be provided with an opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, the programmes of the United Nations.

My delegation heralds the signing of the United Nations- brokered Governors Island Accord last July by President Aristide and the military-backed Government of Haiti, headed by General Raoul Cedras, as an historic opportunity for the Haitian people, the hemisphere, and the principle of democratic rule. The interim period until President Aristide's return to Haiti on the 30th of this month must be a time for healing and laying the groundwork for a smooth take-over, and for a concerted rehabilitation process aimed at bringing some measure of

economic and political stability to that long-suffering country.

My delegation takes this opportunity to reiterate our solidarity with the Haitian people, who have struggled over the past months amidst persistent and blatant human rights abuses and political repression. We hail the efforts and initiatives taken by the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and the Government of the United States of America in bringing the usurpation of authority to an end. Let us pray that the clear message from the resolution of the Haitian crisis by international response will halt the ambitions of the various military aspirants there.

As the United Nations moves to perform its peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-enforcing roles in many troubled areas around the world, harassment, beatings and murder of its personnel, both civilian and military, are on the rise. Earlier in the year a number of United Nations personnel in the Middle East and Cambodia were slain. These killings followed the murder of a nurse working with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Gaza and of a United Nations driver in Afghanistan. This year the world has also been shocked by the deaths of a number of Pakistanis, Italians, Moroccans, Americans and nationals of other countries serving in the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).

My Government takes this opportunity to express its condolences to the Governments and peoples of those countries whose nationals paid the ultimate price in their desire to bring peace and deliver humanitarian assistance to the suffering peoples of the world. We also wish to express our sympathy to the bereaved families of all those United Nations personnel who died in the line of duty. Member States must be reminded of their responsibility to protect United Nations workers and of their obligation to act promptly and effectively to deter, prosecute and punish all those responsible for violence.

We salute the courage and commitment of those dedicated people who continue to accept considerable personal risks in order to carry out United Nations missions. The international community must take appropriate steps to protect its members and we eagerly await the submission of concrete proposals designed to enhance the safety and security of United Nations forces and personnel.

It is evident that the perceived disarray in the United Nations military operation in Somalia is fuelling instability in the country and detracting from the achievement of the original goals of restoring peace and security and ensuring the distribution of humanitarian relief, thereby paving the way for the re-establishment of civil society in the country at large. Naturally, these objectives cannot be achieved unless the international community continues to work in earnest to ensure that disarmament is achieved throughout the country in conformity with the provisions of the Addis Ababa agreement of March 1993, to which all factions are signatories.

In this regard, my delegation is of the view that appropriate measures must be taken against those who continue to impede disarmament, in direct contravention of Security Council resolutions and the Addis Ababa agreement. My delegation welcomes signs of a willingness to negotiate on the part of rebel forces.

From this point on all actions by the United Nations in Somalia should be aimed at winning the trust of the Somali people as a prerequisite to the re-establishment of peace and security, national reconciliation, restoration of the Somali State and the reconstruction and development of the country.

My delegation congratulates the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), under the leadership of Mr. Yasser Arafat, on concluding an agreement with the Rabin Government of Israel to end hostilities among their peoples. We see this as a significant first step that will fail unless it leads to the implementation of the resolutions long agreed to in the United Nations on the territories occupied by Israel and the acceptance by the United Nations of Palestine to membership. Just as my delegation has persistently endorsed the right of Israel to exist within secure borders, we assert the same right for Palestine. At the forty-fifth session of the Assembly, when we were discussing the invasion of Kuwait, my delegation called on this body to demonstrate consistency in responding to its resolutions, and we do so again.

We wish to congratulate the Government of Norway on the pivotal and historic facilitating role they played in the process of mediating in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. We admire the dignified manner of their contribution and subsequent response.

The rapidly deteriorating situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina cries out for urgent resolution. The state of affairs cannot be tolerated much longer. Immeasurable harm in both human and material terms has already been

done, and the Serbs and Croats appear to be bent on the dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina through border changes, by force and by ethnic cleansing. The international community cannot agree to a solution dictated by the Serbs and Croats at the expense of the Bosnian Muslims. We also cannot accept any territorial solution unless it has the agreement of the three parties. My delegation wishes to state unequivocally that the measures necessary to bring about a reversal of the Serbian aggression must include the immediate immobilization of heavy weapons, placing them under effective international control, and the effective enforcement of comprehensive sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until all the conditions in the relevant Security Council resolutions are met. My delegation calls on all those with the resources to influence a return to normality in this part of the world to honour their moral responsibility.

The end of the cold war has resulted in a new spirit of cooperation between erstwhile enemies. Ongoing restructuring of the world body is designed to enhance the capacity of the Organization for preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peacemaking. Regrettably, these changes do not mean the end of bloody regional conflicts. The strife in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nagorny Karabakh and Liberia continues. In Angola, Sudan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan there is conflict and distress.

The demands on the United Nations for peace-keeping and peace-building are increasing daily in the number of operations and personnel as well as in the scope of their mandates. But in order to bring peace and security to these troubled areas the international community must redouble its efforts to bring about a resolution of their conflicts.

One of my country's most important priorities is support for the right of all peoples living under colonial or alien domination and/or foreign occupation to self-determination and independence. Stressing our commitment to the goal of the complete eradication of colonialism, we once again pledge to strengthen our solidarity with all those countries facing aggression or intervention or interference in their internal affairs.

Consistent with this position, we strongly condemn the continuous efforts of certain segments of South African society to perpetuate the system of apartheid. At the same time, we welcome the recent progress towards the establishment of a non-racial democracy, paving the way for the first non-racial elections, scheduled for April 1994, and the eventual reintegration of that country into the international political and economic community.

We welcome the adoption by acclamation on Friday, 8 October, of the General Assembly resolution in support of Mr. Nelson Mandela's call for the immediate lifting of sanctions against South Africa.

The delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is particularly pleased that four vital pieces of legislation, setting up, the Independent Electoral Commission, the Independent Media Commission, the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the Transitional Executive Council have been adopted by both the Negotiating Council and the South African Parliament, and are in the process of being enacted into law.

With the changing world environment the Organization has been catapulted into new prominence and there has been renewed hope, and high expectation, as well as new ideas on the functioning of the General Assembly. The same movement of change is also of vital importance in the Security Council and in the economic and social fields. Let us not lose the momentum in our quest to give new life to the Organization.

The General Assembly is a body that has been functioning below the capacity envisaged by its founding fathers. On the other hand, we have a Security Council that has expanded in scope and power without a corresponding increase in its membership or a reorganization of its functions. The need has also been established for strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council through a better distribution of its functions and a rationalization of its activities.

My delegation is of the view that at a minimum the Security Council should be expanded to allocate permanent seats to Japan and Germany and up to six new rotating seats to be filled on a regional basis in order better to reflect the increased membership of the United Nations and the changed international situation. Certainly, we do not grant to Japan and Germany the recognition they richly deserve.

The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit was about nations joining together in common resolve to do a better job in the future and to offer our children the hope for a brighter tomorrow. The centrepiece of this international effort, Agenda 21, is a blueprint for our planet which the Governments of the world adopted by acclamation. With the creation of a Commission on Sustainable Development

and the restructuring of the economic and social functions of the United Nations, we now have the institutional arrangements in place to ensure that the measures prescribed by Agenda 21 are adequately addressed.

In the interim between Rio and the convening of the first substantial session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, it appeared to many that the spirit of Rio was beginning to fade away, due in part to the failure of the industrialized countries to make firm financial commitments to the programme approved at UNCED. There is, however, renewed hope because, since the June session of the Commission, machinery has been firmly put in place to follow up on pledges made at the Rio Summit.

The establishment by the Commission of two working groups to tackle the thorny issues of financial flows and technology transfer to the developing countries of the South, in addition to reviewing mechanisms for innovative financing of Agenda 21 and for analysing conditions that determine the flow of financial and economic resources, such as debt relief, terms of trade and commodity prices, is a positive approach, and it should give new impetus to the implementation of the global plan which the Rio Summit adopted to protect the world from environmental degradation through the twenty-first century. We wish to thank those who have contributed to the Global Environment Facility, which makes grant funding available to poor countries so that they may properly shoulder their share of environmental responsibilities in our global community.

As we observe new trends in the world economy, it is noteworthy that there is potentially greater capacity for growth of real consumption in developing countries than in the developed ones. Those of us who live in small island States have limited options in response to the international economic environment. The banana industry, which is the lifeline of our economies in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the other countries of the Windward Islands, is currently under threat of extinction. My delegation wishes to record, at this session of the General Assembly, our gratitude to the European Economic Community for its support for this vital component of our economies.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a small developing archipelagic State, with all the generic circumstances associated with small size, limited resources, geographical dispersion and relative isolation from markets. Naturally we also have advantages, which we continue to exploit in the national interest. Development in all its forms is of paramount national importance to us. In this regard, we look forward with enthusiasm to the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which is scheduled to convene in Barbados in 1994. It is our fervent hope that the international community will recognize the special characteristics and developmental needs of this category of countries, which have not changed in the new configuration of world politics. We pray also that there will be tangible benefits following the conclusion of these Conferences.

The United Nations has designated 1993 the International Year for the World's Indigenous People. Forced off their ancestral lands by settlers and colonizers, indigenous peoples in many parts of the world have faced untold discrimination and poverty and are often afforded little say in their political future. It is no surprise, therefore, that they are increasingly seeking to exercise their full range of human rights. The world's communities are urged to treat minorities and indigenous peoples, and persons belonging to them, on the basis of equality, and to take measures that would, *inter alia*, facilitate their full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of the society.

My delegation is proud to state that in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines the indigenous people, the Caribs, are fully integrated into Vincentian society and are beneficiaries of all rights and freedoms under our Constitution. They participate fully in the political process, and today an active representative in the House of Assembly is a descendant of Joseph Chatoyer, the Paramount Chief of the Caribs and a national hero of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Our Government has also taken specific steps, through its land reform and distribution policy, to empower the Caribs, who are the main beneficiaries of the Government's acquisition of the area formerly occupied by Orange Hill Estates, and the subsequent distribution, with title, of economically viable plots to them.

My Government will ensure that our indigenous people continue to participate fully in national society and that their views are solicited and taken into consideration in decision-making processes that affect them and the nation as a whole.

My delegation is proud to co-sponsor a draft resolution of the Standing Committee of Caribbean

Ministers Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community calling for the annual observance of an International Day of Indigenous Peoples. I hope that this draft resolution, when brought before this body, will be adopted by acclamation and will receive unanimous follow-up support from Member countries.

The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes and values highly the deepening of relations between the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Latin America in general. We are also encouraged by the degree of cooperation which is being developed between CARICOM and Central America. In the increasingly competitive world environment, which is gradually being dominated by large trading blocs, it is imperative for our countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to forge closer ties through economic and other forms of functional cooperation.

My Government totally condemns the illicit production, trafficking in and consumption of drugs. These harbingers of violent crime and corruption pose a serious threat to the health and well-being of our economies and our people, endanger our democratic institutions and jeopardize national and regional security.

We are firmly convinced that only integrated regional and international efforts can effectively address the drug problem, and, accordingly, we stress the need for increased local, regional and international cooperation. Greater emphasis should be placed on programmes that generate employment and income for persons attracted to drug production and trafficking as a means of livelihood. These should be pursued concurrently with programmes for the prevention of drug use and the rehabilitation of drug users. The appropriate measures must also be taken to strengthen our judicial institutions to ensure that the perpetrators of drug abuse and related crimes are brought to swift and effective justice.

We in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are closely observing the evolution of democracy in the States of Eastern Europe and the territories of the former Soviet Union, as well as its consolidation worldwide. We agonized with freedom-loving peoples when the Russian constitutional crisis threatened to "put democracy under a shade." We regret the loss of life that resulted from the struggle for control, and we hope that the emergence of a full- fledged system of democracy, with the ultimate power residing in the hands of the people, will not be impeded by any self-serving acts on the part of major players.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes the constitutional resolution of the political impasse in Pakistan. As a member of the Commonwealth, we welcome Mrs. Benazir Bhutto back as Prime Minister of her country and look forward to meeting her in Cyprus at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its resolute commitment to the democratic ideal and the concomitant free enterprise system. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, like the other countries of CARICOM, has gone through a historic constitutional journey, from Crown Colony Government, with its limited franchise, to full political independence under universal adult suffrage. We have adhered to the principles and practice of participatory democracy and the market economy, even when these ideals were not as pervasive and mandatory as they are today. We have stayed the course, by choice and conviction, and our people have reaped the benefits. They will have it no other way.

In this post-cold-war era we are determined to maintain the gains of our democracy which we have accumulated over the years, even as we face the increasing difficulties associated with the marginalization of small States in the face of bloc consolidation and other emerging trends of our time.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to draw the attention of the Assembly to document A/INF/48/6/Add.1, which contains a tentative programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings for the months of October, November and December. This addendum supersedes document A/INF/48/6.

I should like to point out that this schedule is being issued as early as possible in order to assist delegations in planning their work. For its part, the Secretariat will endeavour to ensure that the relevant documentation will be available to delegations ahead of the discussion of any given agenda item.

I should further point out that there are still a few agenda items for the consideration of which no dates have been indicated. I will announce the dates for the consideration of those agenda items in due course and sufficiently in advance. I will also keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes.

The list of speakers for each of the agenda items listed in document A/INF/48/6/Add.1 is now open, and I draw members' attention to that.

As I mentioned last week, I hope to keep as closely as possible to the schedule so that the Assembly can discharge its responsibilities in an orderly fashion. I therefore appeal again to representatives who intend to submit draft resolutions to do so sufficiently in advance of the dates fixed for consideration of items to give members adequate time to examine them. I should also like to remind representatives again that additional time is needed for those draft resolutions involving changes in the work programme or additional expenditures, since they will require the preparation of a statement of programme-budget implications by the Secretary-General.

Furthermore, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee will need adequate time to review the programme-budget implications of a draft resolution before it can be acted on by the Assembly. The Assembly's attention to these matters would be appreciated.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS BY MR. TOFILAU ETI ALESANA, PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF WESTERN SAMOA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa.

Mr. Tofilau Eti Alesana, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa, His Excellency The Honourable Tofilau Eti Alesana, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. ALESANA (Samoa): It is always an honour and a great pleasure to address the General Assembly. My first task, a happy one, is to congratulate you, Sir, most warmly on your election as President of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. We know that in your hands this will be a session of accomplishments.

Let me also thank your able predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, for his outstanding service during the forty-seventh session.

I would next express our concern and sadness over the recent disastrous earthquake in India and extend to the Government and, especially, to the families affected our profound sympathies.

Two years ago, when I last stood here, there was a sense of high expectation, for we were witnessing the drama of political changes to a new world. Many new nation States emerged from that process. We welcome the newest - and some of the smallest - Members of our global family who joined us this year: the Principality of Andorra, Eritrea, the Czech Republic, the Principality of Monaco, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Slovak Republic. As a small State itself, Samoa is particularly pleased to add its welcome, assured of the contribution these new Members will make to our common effort.

Let me also pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and express to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali our deepest admiration and appreciation for the spirit of reform and quality of leadership he brings to the work of the Organization.

With one voice we in this Hall have hailed the ending of East-West tensions. We are right to do so. It has brought about deep and positive changes. Now, as never before, the international community has real opportunities for cooperation and peace. In Washington, barely a month ago today, leaders of two great peoples, men of magnificent courage and foresight, seized such an opportunity for the Israelis and Palestinians. In our global village there is an imperative to secure a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the overall Arab-Israeli conflict. In turn, that peace effort needs to be able to draw sustenance - moral, political and financial - from the whole family of nations. Most warmly we applaud the courage and vision of this bold step. From our distance, and no matter how inadequate, I pledge to the people of Israel and to the Palestinians Samoa's entire support.

But the new opportunities for cooperation in this post-cold-war era are being severely challenged by conflicts that rage in many lands and by the human misery they cause. Tragedy and carnage are seemingly endless in Bosnia, in

Somalia, and in territories of the former Soviet Union. In other areas, too - far too many - we witness daily the most shocking violations of the human person and wanton disregard for the rule of law. This year alone, there have been close to 25 substantial conflicts in the world.

And war is not the only scourge. For we have not freed our world of hunger, poverty or illness. Millions of people have fled from internal strife and persecution, famine and natural disasters. Millions more are migrating for economic reasons.

In my part of the world, island communities now live under the constant threat of ecological disasters. A rise in sea levels and destructive tropical cyclones are particular dangers. The evidence we have is that these are the global and adverse effects of induced climate change. They prey on the natural vulnerabilities of many lands and their peoples, and severely undermine the national livelihood and economic development efforts of many Governments.

My purpose is not simply to catalogue misery and the negative, but rather to point to the vastness of our task. There is no scope for retreat - we must advance with resolve. The world cries out for responses and solutions. And the fact is, the world is now looking more and more to the United Nations. We do not, for a moment, delude ourselves about the complexities of these conflicts or the depth of longstanding animosities - least of all, in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. But I am compelled to say that the horrors being perpetuated in Bosnia offend common decency and almost every principle for which this Organization stands.

That is why we feel that the international community has not been swift or decisive enough in taking action to end the calculated brutality in Bosnia and avert the devastation of so much that is sacred in that land. We pray for the speediest possible settlement, one that is comprehensive and has realistic prospects for the lasting peace and economic prosperity of all concerned. There should be no reward for aggression.

The grim outlook for many troubled areas of the world should not, however, cast a shadow over the hope typified by the Palestinian-Israeli peace accord. Cambodia is a high point in peacemaking, and we rejoice in this special accomplishment for the people of that ancient country and for the United Nations, as we do in the announcement in this Assembly by Nelson Mandela of the imminent demise of apartheid. South Africa's move towards a multiracial and democratic society is the attainment of a dream we have all shared for so long. We pray for the peaceful success of the announced general elections in April 1994.

We are indeed at a turning-point - a point at which we should now turn to the healing process. We must put behind us the divisiveness and acrimony which have characterized the debates and the decisions of past years.

Almost every speaker in this debate has focused on peace-keeping and the unprecedented demands being made of the United Nations. Our support of United Nations peace-keeping operations is total, as is our acceptance of preventive diplomacy as fundamental to "An Agenda for Peace". We have no military resources or experience, and we have been able to assist only by way of our assessed contributions. But it is clear to us that failure to provide adequate financial and other resources undermines both the peace effort and the authority of the United Nations.

It seems to be generally acknowledged that, in the space of some two years, the cost of United Nations peace-keeping has quadrupled to a level currently four times larger than the United Nations regular budget. In our humble opinion, peace-keeping at such a level cannot possibly be sustained without adequate and improved financing and financial management. Above all, peace-keeping objectives and mandates need to be clearly identified and managed. There is everything to be gained by the application of the principles of accountability, consistency and transparency.

Peace-keeping at current levels has compounded the tragedy of war through the loss of United Nations staff and personnel. In the strongest terms, we condemn the attacks and deliberate targeting of United Nations peace-keeping forces wherever they occur. We support early and effective international measures and necessary arrangements within the United Nations system for the full protection of United Nations personnel and forces, as well as action against those who commit acts of violence against our messengers of peace.

In all this, the Security Council is the vital link. We now have a proposal before the Assembly to take a closer look at the arrangements and strengthening of the Security Council. We also acknowledge the useful report the Secretary-General has sent us on the various views expressed. Our own concern is for the efficacy and effectiveness of the Council. So long as these are assured, Samoa would support the required reforms to the Security

Council. But, no doubt, we should all take sufficient time to ponder these matters.

In the wider aspect, we believe that no amount of force and no measure of peace-keeping can sustain peace and security without attention to the root causes. The general experience is that human misery, brought about by poverty and the denial of human and democratic rights, is the real and fundamental problem. We therefore uphold the belief expressed by many leaders from this rostrum that socio-economic development and democratic reforms are essential to the prevention of political and social crises. We think this should remain a major preoccupation of the United Nations.

We believe deeply in the underlying importance of human rights in all United Nations activities. In this respect, we welcome the Declaration and Programme of Action produced by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna and the acknowledgement in unquestionable terms of the universality of human rights. The results of the Vienna Conference constitute a significant advance in the promotion and protection of human rights, not least in the recognition that development has a true claim to be considered a human right.

We agree with and support the proposal to establish a United Nations high commissioner for human rights. Such an office could serve as a strong focal point for coordination of the currently fragmented branches of the United Nations human rights system and could help to ensure that human rights are integrated into the work of all United Nations programmes.

The very basis of human rights is the right of peoples to determine their own future and governance. This is fundamental, and it is something very close to our hearts, given our experience and the political evolvement of our own State. The South Pacific Forum has continued to call on the metropolitan countries to take into account the wishes of the people in the Territories and to respect their right to self-determination.

We welcome the ongoing dialogue between France and all parties in New Caledonia regarding the future of the Territory. The peaceful evolution towards self-determination in New Caledonia is in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Its attainment was made possible by the constructive intervention of the United Nations decolonization Committee and by the willingness of the Government of France, the parties in New Caledonia and the South Pacific Forum to show restraint to give full consideration to each other's concerns and sensitivities. What we see in New Caledonia today stands as a testament to the cooperative spirit characteristic of the Pacific region and as a true example of peaceful and preventive diplomacy at work.

At the same time, we acknowledge and respect the views and interests of those Territories that wish to continue with the status quo.

Peace, stability, security and the preservation of our environment are crucial to the South Pacific region. Our commitment to these objectives is unwavering, and Samoa, together with its regional partners, will continue to call for a permanent end to nuclear testing, to the dumping of chemical and toxic wastes and to the transportation of these materials in our waters. The South Pacific Forum countries have continued to urge the remaining nuclear-power States to heed our concerns and to accede to the Protocols of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. That Treaty is the paramount symbol of the region's strong feeling about and commitment to a nuclear-free environment. We are encouraged by recent indications from some of these States that they will reconsider their current positions on the Treaty and on other nuclear-related issues that are of concern to the region.

Samoa is particularly pleased about the extension of the nuclear-testing moratorium. However, we are deeply distressed to have learned last week of a breach of that moratorium. I have cause to believe that substantial numbers in the Assembly share our concern and our earnest prayer that no further tests will be carried out and that other nuclear Powers will not resume their nuclear-testing programmes. It is our dearest hope that such testing will one day cease - permanently. We also urge all Member States - the nuclear Powers in particular - to work towards the early conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

We welcome the unique opportunity offered by the end of the cold war to focus and develop comprehensive-nuclear-disarmament initiatives. We stand ready to do what we can in support of these. We should say, however, that the prospect of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and - worse - of their acquisition by unfriendly parties is of major concern to us, as, of course, to the world community as a whole. It underscores the urgent need for the control, reduction and eventual elimination of these deadly weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is a vital part of the disarmament process must be extended indefinitely when it comes up for review in 1995.

We look to the nuclear-weapon States to take the lead in the nuclear-disarmament process and, at the same time, to illustrate with concrete action their full commitment to our collective goals and objectives. The South Pacific region cannot continue to be a testing ground for nuclear devices; or to be a dumping ground for chemical wastes; or to be exposed to contamination by toxic wastes and other environmentally threatening substances.

Environmental security is crucial to Samoa and other countries of the South Pacific. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio in 1992, provided us with an opportunity to put our global house in order - an occasion of promise, of rising hopes. The setting of Agenda 21 and the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development are only first steps. Implementation is the difficult task - the true test.

Like other places, our small island States and low-lying atolls face a host of constraints. Isolated and ecologically fragile, small island States like my own are amongst the most vulnerable to external economic, trade and climatic factors. Without international cooperation, and without an integrated approach, the outlook is not promising.

The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States - to be held in Barbados in April 1994 - will provide a first opportunity to implement Agenda 21 and to reaffirm commitments made in Rio. We firmly believe that international attention, focused at next year's global conference, will provide valuable guidance towards a sustainable-development effort worldwide. It seems to us that if there is failure to secure sustainable development for small island States, there will be no real chance of success elsewhere.

The work of the Preparatory Committee remains incomplete. But the stakes are too high for inconclusiveness, so a resumed preparatory session before the Barbados Conference is essential.

I should say that our call for international cooperation is fully matched by our resolve to do what is necessary and possible at the domestic level. As a country, we acknowledge and accept primary responsibility for our environment and development. To this end, we have completed a national environment-management plan, have put in place the necessary legislative framework and have taken steps to adhere to the appropriate international Conventions.

In all of this, we have had the fullest cooperation of the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme - an organization established by the Pacific region and partner countries to coordinate not only national and regional activities but also the region's participation in world-wide initiatives on the environment. This underlines our basic belief that the total efforts of all nations, acting responsibly and in concert, will be crucial if we are adequately to protect our environment and our planet.

I should note the general satisfaction of my delegation with the world-wide debate, which is now under way, about the future of development - and, thus, about our common future. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was a special landmark. A few months ago, contrary to predictions, the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights registered important accomplishments. Next year, we shall see the particularly crucial Conference on Population and Development; thereafter, the Conference on women, and then the social-development Summit.

Yesterday, we heard Papua New Guinea's initiative on opportunity and participation. We consider this a pertinent proposal, and that it is an important element in the overall effort to involve citizens and to enhance, in particular, the economies of developing countries.

These global conferences and initiatives will map out new priorities and courses of action requiring from States and ordinary citizens the highest degree of commitment and cooperation. Meantime, we will need to concentrate on strengthening and revitalizing our Organization if we are to respond efficiently and effectively to present and future priorities. To this purpose, Samoa supports all remedial reforms to the United Nations system to ensure optimum use of scarce resources.

Next year has been declared, by the Assembly, the International Year of the Family. In two years' time, the United Nations will mark its fiftieth anniversary. This gives us all reason to move ahead with our work, resolved to improve the condition of our world and the well-being of our global family.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Tofilau Eti Alesana, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. ALEXIS (Grenada): It is with profound pleasure that my delegation conveys greetings and best wishes from the Government and the people of Grenada to the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

My delegation is pleased to extend sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly during this forty-eighth session. We are especially pleased because you create history by being the first person from the region to which Grenada belongs to hold the prestigious post of General Assembly Presidency, coming as you do from our sister Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country, the Republic of Guyana.

My delegation takes this opportunity also to commend Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria for the excellent manner in which he conducted the Assembly's proceedings at its forty-seventh session. My Government also wishes to extend its commendations to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his indefatigable efforts in the service of the Organization.

The Grenadian delegation is pleased to extend a warm welcome to the six new Members of the United Nations: the Czech Republic; the Republic of Slovakia, Eritrea, Monaco, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Andorra.

The problems of developing countries are still daunting. Every country must try to help itself. My Government continues to pursue its own economic structural adjustment programme, with which the people of Grenada have shown great understanding and cooperation. But prolonged difficulties in the economic sector can give rise to attitudes and conditions that can adversely impact upon social development and administrative capacities, and so my delegation calls on the international community to show greater flexibility in assisting the adjustment process of Grenada and other countries experiencing economic conditions similar to Grenada's.

Poverty, debt, inadequate resources, marginalization and the lack of secure markets for our products deal serious blows to social, economic and political stability. Further, the impact on small, undiversified economies from liberalizing trade regimes and regional trading blocs has been shocking. The fact is that free trade is not always synonymous with fair trade: factors of size, resource endowment and levels of development must be duly considered in settling trade relations. This is particularly so with small, open, primary-producing economies, where one serious natural disaster, such as a hurricane, can devastate all the fruits of our national labour invested in bananas, cocoa and nutmeg.

In this scenario, concessioned trade is very much needed to produce anything like a level playing field. Developing countries will not progress on sympathy; they require equity. Small countries such as Grenada cannot do it all alone. We need assistance for diversification, for development of our human resources and for the implementation of sustainable development.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) has placed before the world a wide range of challenges for managing the environment in a sustainable way. Developing countries, in particular small island nation States, like Grenada, are anxious that all Governments should move faster to effect the programme laid out by UNCED's plan of work on sustainable development, Agenda 21.

Greater emphasis needs to be placed by donor agencies on training, as well as on technical and financial assistance to developing countries to aid in sustainable forestry and agricultural practices. My delegation is convinced that the problems of the environment cannot wait. Grenada is particularly pleased with Agenda 21's special recognition of the peculiar difficulties confronting the development of small island developing States and with the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), arising from that recognition, that will be held in Barbados in April and May 1994.

It is Grenada's sincere hope that that Conference will serve to generate a better understanding of the challenges and predicaments confronting small island developing States, and that it will produce the necessary partnership and establish a sound path to their sustainable development. Much of the important negotiations preparatory to the Conference remains incomplete. My delegation is concerned that the success of the Barbados Conference may be jeopardized unless an intercessional mechanism is arranged to provide for the advancement of the negotiations prior to April 1994.

Grenada joins the rest of the world in rejoicing over the success of diplomatic perseverance in Afghanistan, El

Salvador, Nicaragua, Cambodia and Haiti. Grenada is, however, highly disturbed by the renewal of politically motivated violence in Haiti. Grenada will continue to rally behind the United Nations and the Organization of American States in their efforts to restore democracy and stability to Haiti. Grenada welcomes the Governors Island negotiated settlement aimed at restoring to Haiti the legitimate Government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. We support the establishment of an international constabulary force in that country. We call on all in Haitian society to give democracy and peace a chance.

Grenada wishes to record its satisfaction over the historic attainment of formal recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We further applaud the signing of the Palestinian autonomy agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. It is a long-awaited peace initiative which will pave the way for the continued peaceful negotiation of tougher issues. Such a step will, in the long term, contribute to making the Middle East and the world a more peaceful place.

Grenada welcomes the peace agreements initialled between Israel and Morocco and between Israel and Jordan as steps in the right direction.

Grenada welcomes the finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq, which was accomplished by the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission on 20 May 1993. We also welcome the adoption by the Security Council of its resolution 833 (1993), in which it guaranteed the inviolability of the boundary between the two States and called for respect for that resolution.

My Government is, on the other hand, perturbed by the continuing wars in other parts of the world, such as the former Yugoslavia, Liberia, Somalia and Angola. We are alarmed at the lack of respect for United Nations peace-keepers and aid workers, and call upon all sides in such conflicts to turn to peaceful negotiation and respect for human lives.

The promotion of democracy and the enhancement of human rights must be vigorously pursued. The process of democratization has to be entrenched. My delegation, moreover, looks forward to welcoming to the United Nations, in the near future, the Republic of China on Taiwan. With its 21 million people, the Republic of China on Taiwan, has, over the past 20 years, progressed economically, socially and democratically to the point where it can no longer properly be kept out of the United Nations. The Republic of China on Taiwan has established diplomatic relations with a number of countries and has significantly contributed to the uplifting of the struggling economies of a great number of countries and the development of their peoples. Surely, these impressive achievements eminently qualify the Republic of China on Taiwan for admission to this Organization.

Peace and democracy reaching areas new to them has noticeably been resulting in the deflection of aid to them, at the expense of traditional stable democracies. That newly emerging democracies have to be given due attention cannot be denied, but this cannot be wholly at the expense of the old democracies. The peace dividend accruing from the end of the cold war and the halting of the arms race should be expansive enough to nurture new democracies without abandoning old ones to unnecessary and far-reaching social and societal conflicts. After all, the issue of development is no less important than the issue of peace.

International peace presupposes domestic quietude in the States making up the community of nations. This requires continuing emphasis on human-resource development and the enhancement of cultural and social amenities in such areas as education, health and housing. In this regard, Grenada insists on the protection of the rights of the child, enhancement of the rights of women and the strengthening of the family unit. The pursuit of the human race must be the nurturing of peace by the ending of discrimination and the enhancement of equality, whether between sexes or races, or with regard to social origins, religion or whatever other differences might have been created through ignorance or arrogance. As we in Grenada say "A child is a child".

My delegation welcomes the establishment of a criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. It is with great concern that the world has witnessed men, women and children being massacred in that region in the name of ethnicity and religion. Grenada takes this opportunity to encourage the establishment of similar tribunals in areas where they may be necessary.

Such cooperation as the world is seeing today in restoring democracy and civil and political rights to citizens of warring countries ought to be extended to the field of international criminal activities. Grenada stands ready to collaborate with other countries in putting a halt to such activities as illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption and money-laundering and their associated

ills. These tend to decay the moral fibre of a society and drain already scant resources in efforts to combat the menace, thus frustrating national development processes. Grenada has accordingly enacted legislation giving effect to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, of 1988, providing for the forfeiture and confiscation of the proceeds of crime, outlawing moneylaundering and promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fight against these menaces.

Grenada is very pleased that the South African Parliament has agreed to establish a Transitional Executive Council, which is expected to allow the black majority to participate in the governing of their country. We received with joy the news that 27 April 1994 has been set as the date for the election of a Government in South Africa in which South Africans of all races, colours, beliefs and genders will participate. We applaud the efforts that have been made by the Government of President De Klerk and the African National Congress of Nelson Mandela to usher in genuine democracy in South Africa. We encourage all South Africans to give full support to that progress.

Throughout the world, people are looking towards the United Nations for solutions to their political, economic, ethnic and social problems. The freeing of the United Nations from ideological tensions has made this possible; but we are aware that the United Nations must now be restructured, the better to meet these ends. The composition of the Security Council should be re-examined, with new permanent seats on that Council being allotted to such countries as Japan, without current permanent membership being affected. Also, additional seats should be added. Further, an appropriate mechanism is needed to establish adequate oversight and accountability in the United Nations. The capability of the United Nations to conduct peace-keeping should be enhanced and rationalized.

World security requires all of us, nations great as well as small, to make extra efforts to attain and maintain peace and democracy for development. As a community of nations, let us therefore work diligently and tirelessly to attain these goals.

Mr. MBEKEANI (Malawi): The Malawi delegation is pleased to join other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the business of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Guyana is a sister country which is held in high regard and admiration by Malawi. You are an illustrious son of Guyana and are highly qualified and fully prepared to lead and manage the enormous tasks which must be accomplished at this session of the General Assembly. My delegation wishes your presidency great success.

At its forty-seventh session the General Assembly considered important and, in some cases, intractable issues. This would not have been possible were it not for the painstaking patience, efficiency and diplomatic skills of its President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, a distinguished international jurist and former Foreign Minister of Bulgaria. The Malawi delegation congratulates him on a job well done.

My delegation wishes to express its profound sorrow for the considerable suffering, loss of life and destruction of property caused by the earthquake which occurred on 29 September 1993 in the Indian state of Maharashtra. The heartfelt and sincere condolences of the Government and the people of Malawi unreservedly go to the Government and the people of India as they struggle to alleviate the painful after-effects of this tragedy.

We are thankful to God for giving Malawi good rains in the season just ended. The drought experienced in the last two seasons was severe and devastating in its effects. All of southern Africa suffered terribly from this scourge. Malawi's economy was seriously affected by the drought, beginning in February 1992. In 1991 economic growth was 7.8 per cent in real gross domestic product. It declined in real terms by 7.9 per cent during 1992, which represented a precipitous fall in real income for the people. The volume of maize, our staple food, was only 600,000 tonnes in 1992, down from the 1991 production level of 1.6 million tonnes. In 1993 Malawi had a good harvest of close to 2 million tonnes of maize. However, complete recovery from the drought will take some time.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my Government and the people of Malawi, to thank the United Nations system and, in particular, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, which were the major catalysts in the United Nations -southern African Development Community drought relief programme. We also thank the bilateral donors and the non-governmental organizations which, together, saved the day for Malawi and the whole southern African region with massive imports of food, medicines and other humanitarian assistance supplies. However, the Malawi economy continues to be confronted by a major balance-of-payments deficit problem arising from the large volume of maize imports during the drought.

Malawi has been hosting a large number of refugees from Mozambique, who started entering Malawi in large numbers in 1986, and by 1992 the refugee population in the country had soared to about 1.5 million people. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, non-governmental organizations and many other interested parties that have throughout been intimately involved in this humanitarian task will agree that, despite the severe adverse impact of hosting such a large number of people, Malawi is managing one of the most successful refugee programmes in the world, thanks to the prevailing peace, which is due to stable political leadership, good and reliable security structures and a fairly efficient administration.

Mr. Martini Herrera (Guatemala), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The problem of the Mozambican refugees in Malawi, which was a consequence of the civil war between the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO, will come to an end as all protocols of the Rome General Peace Accord are implemented in full. Malawi, which was represented at the historic signing of the Peace Accord on 4 October 1992, commends President Chissano of the Republic of Mozambique and Mr. Dhlakama, President of RENAMO, for signing the Peace Accord. We strongly encourage them to continue to work closely together and with the United Nations to ensure that peace and political stability are firmly established in Mozambique. This is a prerequisite for the reconstruction of that great and beautiful country to commence and for progress to be realized in all areas of development. My delegation is therefore fully supportive of Security Council resolution 863 (1993) and calls on all the parties to implement it speedily.

The Government and people of Malawi wish to see the uninterrupted repatriation of their brothers and sisters to their homes in Mozambique in safety and security. We therefore call for the specific prioritization of the de-mining programme, the demobilization of the armed forces and their placement in the designated assembly areas, and the finalization of discussions on the draft electoral law. The people of Mozambique demand this, and it is also in the vital interests of Malawi, which has suffered tremendously from the adverse impact of the 16-year civil war in Mozambique.

My delegation wishes to stress that the cost of hosting over 1 million refugees not only is very high but, for Malawi, has reached a crisis point. This cost is paid in the displacement of Malawians from agricultural land; in over-grazing, deforestation and environmental degradation; in tremendous pressures and strain on the Government administrative infrastructure, budgetary and human resources; and, not least, in the strain on the socio-economic infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, roads, bridges and water supplies. My delegation is taking this opportunity to appeal to the donor community for assistance in all these areas, which are crucial for the country's sustainable development.

The General Peace Accord in Mozambique is close to the heart of Malawi. I therefore wish to reiterate that Malawi will continue to collaborate with Mozambique closely - at the bilateral level, between the Governments of the two sister countries; through the Tripartite Commission, whose members are Malawi, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Mozambique; and through the Malawi-Mozambique Security Commission - until the peace process has been consolidated. Peace and the return of normal life in Mozambique will guarantee Malawi the use of its traditional, and shortest, routes to the sea via the ports of Nacala and Beira. The reopening and full use of these ports will represent considerable savings through highly reduced transport costs and in limited foreign exchange resources.

My country undertook the most historic event since independence by holding, on 14 June 1993, the national referendum which was initiated by our President, His Excellency Ngwazi Kamuzu Banda in order to give the people of Malawi the opportunity to choose between a one-party and multi-party system of government. My delegation is pleased to report to this Assembly that by all accounts, including those of the United Nations, it was a peaceful, free and fair exercise. Sixty-three per cent of the population voted for a multi-party system of government. Their decision was respected and accepted by my President in a landmark statement on 17 June 1993, which included an announcement of his intention to amend the Constitution to allow for the formation of political parties, to call for a general election in a year's time and to declare a general amnesty to enable political exiles to return home and participate in the political process.

My delegation takes this opportunity to convey to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the gratitude of my Government and the people of Malawi for the assistance the United Nations system provided in making the national referendum exercise a resounding success. Intergovernmental organizations such as the

European Community and other bilateral donors also provided Malawi with invaluable assistance during this period. My Government is most grateful to all of them. What has happened in Malawi demonstrates beyond question the repeatedly stated commitment of my President and his Government to peaceful reforms, good governance, human rights and democratization. Those who did not believe in the seriousness of this commitment have been proved totally wrong.

For the last 29 years of its independence, Malawi has been preoccupied with socio-economic development, which is rural-based in its reality, as a matter of sustained and deliberate Government policy. The country had no other choice because it is completely agricultural, with a large small-holder agriculture component as its backbone. The political leadership consistently and untiringly preached the doctrine of respect for the land and farming to the ordinary people in the villages throughout the country. This has paid off in the disciplined commitment the Malawi people have to farming. As a consequence, over the years a large proportion of donor financing has focused on the agricultural sector.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank, on behalf of my Government, all the multilateral donors - the Bretton Woods institutions and the African Development Bank, among others - and the bilateral cooperating partners for the unremitting assistance they have given Malawi, enabling it to implement successfully its agricultural programmes and projects over these past years. Without this assistance, it would not have been possible to achieve the sense of discipline and respect for farming that is now consolidated in the people of Malawi, which confirms a vision that the Malawi leadership has carried out with practical zeal and tenacity.

Regrettably, in the very recent past, Malawi's modest achievements in the agricultural sector and the economy in general have had to go through severe and unpalatable shocks well beyond the Government's control, such as the drought and refugee problems. But, more than that, the economy has had to cope in the past year with the sudden suspension of donor assistance by the Government's developed partners. Consequently, the country's balance-of-payments financing requirements were badly affected and this disproportionately imposed considerable negative results on the economy's performance. For example, private-sector firms performed far below capacity and the financing of almost all agreed development projects stopped suddenly and completely. Malawi is small, poor and landlocked. It is also in the category of least developed countries, with a population of only about 9 million. Malawi could therefore hardly sustain or cushion this kind of massive damage to its economy. Its external debt burden soared, its terms of trade deteriorated badly and the livelihood of the ordinary men, women and children in the villages was badly affected.

The issues of human rights, good governance and other conditionalities that were behind these actions by the donor community have now, I am happy to say, been dealt with decisively, each one in an irreversible manner and, where applicable, by Act of Parliament. For example, due process of law is firmly established and in practice in Malawi. There are no political detainees in any of its prisons. The International Committee of the Red Cross is workinq closely with the Government, and has already visited all prisons and made recommendations for improvements where this has been found to be necessary. There is freedom of expression in the country. As I speak, over 20 newspapers and magazines are in circulation. So far, six political parties have registered and are bracing themselves for the forthcoming general election.

At present the Malawi Congress Party, which is continuing to rule the country until the people elect a new government, has, together with other political parties in the country, established the National Consultative Council and the National Executive Committee, which have clearly defined powers to oversee the transitional process in the run-up to the general election. Each of the political parties, including the Malawi Congress Party, has equal representation on the National Consultative Council and the National Executive Committee. Those institutions ensure and guarantee that there is dialogue between and among Malawians, who discuss and resolve whatever differences may exist on the issues affecting the transition. Those institutions replace the President's Committee on Dialogue and the Public Affairs Committee, which were established immediately after the referendum and, in addition, are designed to work closely with the Government and the National Parliament. The United Nations, particularly through its Electoral Assistance Unit in the Secretariat here in New York and through the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva, has been a catalyst in this whole transitional process. My Government is therefore most encouraged, being convinced that the peace and stability that have existed since the holding of the national referendum will continue until and after the forthcoming general election, which is expected to take place some time in May 1994.

These positive and irreversible developments I have described give my Government the confidence that all its bilateral- development partners and its major multilateral donors will fully resume development assistance flows and balance-of-payments support to Malawi. This, we hope, will be done without further delays, in the interests of reviving the economy quickly and reducing the severe damage it has sustained and the unnecessary continued suffering of its people.

The Malawi delegation is grateful to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in particular, because it was the first to confirm, in a report to its Governing Council at its fortieth session, in June, that there existed in Malawi an enabling political, economic and social environment to implement its Fifth Country Programme. The Malawi Government has no need to prove its abiding commitment to development. Allow me, therefore, to take this opportunity to appeal to the donor community not to reduce its pledges of funding to the UNDP. To do so would have catastrophic effects on the whole democratization process, on the ongoing field programmes and projects and also on the successful projects being implemented under the Fifth Country Programme.

At this juncture the Malawi delegation wishes to reaffirm its unwavering support of the recently adopted Tokyo Declaration on African Development, which represents the first concrete action and commitment of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Malawi, a least-developed country, would also like to take this opportunity to lend its unwavering support to the Programme of Action for Least-Developed Countries, which found its expression in the Declaration issued by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of least-developed countries when they met here in New York on 30 September 1993, and to the Declaration of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 that was adopted on 5 October 1993. We hope that the donor community will respond positively and act accordingly on these specific problems affecting the developing countries. Their decisive resolutions are pivotal to the role of the United Nations in development and integral to the call issued in General Assembly resolution 47/181 for the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on an agenda for development and for the Assembly to discuss it in its preliminary form at this current session.

Malawi is not oblivious of the wider political atmosphere that is affecting international relations and causing serious problems with regard to peace and security. The desperate situation and horrendous scenes of the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina represent one such example. It is the strong conviction of the Malawi Government that peace is the only answer to the unending violence we are witnessing in the Balkans. There is an extremely urgent need to end the suffering of the people there - innocent men, women and children. My delegation strongly supports all efforts of the United Nations and the European Community, and those of other parties, to resolve the problem through the ongoing negotiations in Geneva and elsewhere. The problem is a human catastrophe, notwithstanding its tragic, historical roots.

With regard to Somalia, my Government is of the view that the Somalis should resolve their problems themselves. However, the prerequisite for realizing that objective is to establish and consolidate peace throughout Somalia and to help create processes that will make it possible for the country to reaffirm its sovereignty. Tremendous humanitarian-assistance achievements have already been made to alleviate the plight of the Somali people, who are suffering from hunger, starvation and death in the midst of mayhem, anarchy and the complete collapse of civil authority. The United Nations and the international community, through the contributions of selfless non-governmental organizations and all nations - particularly the United States, which has contributed troops under the United Nations flag - deserve to be thanked for bringing Somalia back to life. In the view of my delegation, it is imperative that the United Nations and the international community be allowed to complete this wholesome task by establishing conditions for peace and civil authority based clearly on the Addis Ababa agreements of 27 March 1993. The Malawi delegation fully supports the present United Nations role in Somalia.

Similarly, it is the strong conviction of my Government that the present situation in Angola calls for strong and dramatic action by the international community. The United Nations has been selfless in what it has done in Angola, where the untold suffering of women, children and the elderly goes on unabated and is indeed completely inexplicable and totally unnecessary. The Malawi delegation calls upon the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations and the signatory Powers to the Bicesse Peace Accords to compel the UNITA leadership to come to the negotiating table with the Angola Government to establish peace, security and stability in the country. My Government fully supports Security Council resolution 864 (1993), which has now been put into effect. Dr. Savimbi and the UNITA leadership must not ignore international concerns and the content of that resolution. They must

honour and respect the results of the United Nations-supervised general election, which by all accounts was free and fair.

With regard to the situation in South Africa, the Malawi delegation wishes to put on record its complete support for the historic agreement by the Multi-Party Negotiating Council in Johannesburg, whose successfully negotiated transitional institutions have now been enacted into law by the parliament in Cape Town. Those institutions are designed to oversee and control the influential factors in the run-up to the general election on 27 April 1994. I refer in particular to the Transitional Executive Council and to the Independent Broadcasting Authority, the Independent Media Commission and the Independent Electoral Commission.

My delegation takes this opportunity, on behalf of the Malawi Government, to congratulate all the parties on the Negotiating Council and, in particular, the African National Congress and Mr. Nelson Mandela, its President, and the President of South Africa, Mr. Frederick de Klerk and his National Party. It has been a very long haul to reach this historic stage, and the imperative is therefore clear, namely, that all possible assistance by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the European Community, the Commonwealth Secretariat and friendly Governments and people of good will must now be intensified in order to remove all forms of violence, ensure that the general election takes place on 27 April 1994 and that a non-racial, democratic government is installed in South Africa, based on the will of the majority of its people.

My delegation welcomes the historic agreement on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) which was signed on 13 September 1993 in Washington, D.C. It provides a framework for lasting peace in the Middle East, and in the view of the Malawi delegation, it deserves all the support it can receive from all well-disposed sources. History dictates that this should be so. This agreement is a prerequisite to international peace, security and political stability beyond the Middle East.

The PLO/Israel peace agreement is yet another demonstration of the dramatic changes in international relations that have taken place in the last three to four years, following the collapse of communism and the end of the cold war. It is in this context, that my Government is optimistic that the still unresolved major international political issues will be similarly dealt with, issues such as the problem of North and South Korea and that of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan. In the view of the Malawi delegation, the time has now come for serious consideration to be given to the eligibility of the Republic of China on Taiwan to become a Member of the United Nations. We cannot talk about human rights and the universality of the United Nations while in the same breath ignoring the existence of over 20 million people in the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Finally, allow me to make observations on two pertinent issues. First, my delegation welcomes the recent pronouncement by the United States delegation on supporting the membership of Japan and Germany in the Security Council. This announcement is definite recognition that the time has come for representation in the Security Council to reflect the changed international political scene and reality as well as geographical balance. The Security Council must not only be transparent in its decision-making; it is a political necessity that it also reflect what the world is today, and not what it was 48 years ago. There is no other organ in the United Nations today which makes such momentous decisions affecting international peace and security. My delegation is therefore strongly of the view that Africa equally deserves to have a permanent seat or equal and balanced representation of some kind, in the Council. The Malawi delegation looks forward to the expected deliberations on this issue, which will inevitably go beyond the life of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Representation on governing councils of the respective United Nations agencies and bodies is another important subject before the General Assembly at this session, in the context of the reform, restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in all its aspects. My delegation supports a negotiated approach to the points of disagreement between the developing countries and their partners in development as a whole. The only way forward is for the two groups to work together and arrive at a consensus by the end of November 1994. My delegation will support the view taken by the Group of 77 on this issue, when it comes to a conclusion in due course.

I wish you, Sir, and the Assembly fruitful deliberations.

Mr. ALIYEV (Azerbaijan) *(interpretation from Russian)*: Allow me first to congratulate Mr. Samuel Insanally on his election to his responsible post, and to wish him every success in his work.

Allow me also to express gratitude to the President of our last session, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for his able guidance of our work, and to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, for his dynamic, tireless work to restructure the Organization and enhance its effectiveness, given the qualitative changes occurring in the system of international relations.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new members of the United Nations: the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, Monaco and Andorra.

The forty-eighth session of the General Assembly is taking place at a momentous time. The twentieth century, which has experienced two of the most destructive wars in the history of mankind, as well as the cold war and the arms race, which have depleted natural and financial resources, the intellectual and moral potential of civilization, is nevertheless ending on an optimistic note. Totalitarian regimes have fallen, scores of countries have gained independence and universal values of democracy and the market economy are now finding new advocates throughout the world.

We are proud that our small country, which straddles Europe and Asia, a country with an ancient culture and a proud history, has not been left behind in the truly universal historical process of the triumph of democracy and national and economic revival. Azerbaijan regained its independence less than two years ago. The path travelled by our country over these 22 months has not been without difficulties and has been marked by contradictions and tragic events. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the young State of Azerbaijan is following the only true path leading to genuine independence.

This has been borne out by the results of the recent presidential elections held at the beginning of October, when the overwhelming majority of the people of Azerbaijan voted for Mr. Heydar Aliyev, an experienced politician and recognized leader of our country, who is firmly committed to the idea of building a democratic, secular society with a market economy.

Unfortunately, the natural historical process of the fall of empires and the acquisition of independence and statehood by their peoples is often accompanied by excesses of extreme nationalism. Many attempt to exploit the democratization of the social and political life of young independent States to undermine their internal stability. Nationalist separatist movements are often used as a way to achieve these ends.

Unfortunately, Azerbaijan has fallen victim to such acts of provocation. For six years now the Republic of Armenia has been waging an undeclared war against Azerbaijan to fulfil its territorial claims. The sad facts of Armenia's aggression are as follows: 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan is now occupied by Armenian troops, and 1 million of our country's civilians have no homes or means of survival. The economic infrastructure of the Azerbaijani Republic's occupied region has been destroyed. Unique historical and cultural sites of Azerbaijan have been destroyed. And all this is occurring under the cover of an ongoing propaganda campaign and alleged non-involvement by the Republic of Armenia in the aggression.

Azerbaijan has often proclaimed, and continues to proclaim, its commitment to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. We welcome and commend the efforts of the international community, the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as well as the efforts made by individual States - Russia, the United States, Turkey, Iran and Kazakhstan - in recent years to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Armenia/Azerbaijan conflict.

Azerbaijan welcomed the Security Council's adoption of resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993) calling for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from Azerbaijan territory that had been seized. Azerbaijan also welcomed the initial timetable - worked out within the framework of the Minsk Group of the CSCE - of urgent steps to implement Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993), several revised drafts of which, however, were aborted because of the Armenian side.

Azerbaijan stresses its commitment to the initial approach of the CSCE - that is, that the Minsk Conference should be preceded by the complete liberation of Azerbaijan's occupied territories. This was stressed in particular by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, G. A. Aliyev, yesterday during the reception for CSCE representatives who are now visiting the region.

We are confident that, despite certain difficulties - sometimes substantive - in the approach to the terms of the peaceful settlement of the conflict, the political realism and the sense of responsibility for the fate of our people shown

by the Azerbaijan side will be appreciated by our negotiating partners.

Azerbaijan, which is richly endowed with a variety of natural resources and which has a fairly well-developed industrial potential, has all the conditions necessary to overcome our objective difficulties in this transitional period towards a market economy.However, since one out of every six inhabitants of our country has been forced to leave his home and now has no means of survival, as a result of the hostilities and occupation of one fifth of our territory, the humanitarian assistance provided by various international organizations that have enormous experience in this area is assuming great importance for our country.

In this difficult period for my country, Azerbaijan - and primarily the people of Azerbaijan, who have suffered most - has been given all round support and assistance by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. On behalf of my people and Government, I take this opportunity to express profound gratitude to all international organizations, humanitarian institutions and specialized agencies and the peoples and Governments of many States that have responded to the suffering of the Azerbaijan people who have fallen victim to aggression.

The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan also expresses profound gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for having established a United Nations - United Nations Development Programme Interim Office in Azerbaijan. We are deeply convinced that the activities of this Office will help to strengthen and expand the comprehensive relations between our Republic and the United Nations system. We are convinced, also, that this cooperation will be mutually advantageous in view of the initial results of interaction between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the system of specialized agencies of the United Nations, the majority of which our country joined in 1992 and 1993.

We attach overriding importance to international cooperation in the field of the environment and sustainable development and also to the comprehensive expansion of world trade and the elimination of all barriers that restrict that process.

Azerbaijan welcomed the decision to convene a World Summit for Social Development and is prepared to take an active part in preparing for that Summit, the successful convening of which we believe will lay the basis for an effective global development strategy for the twenty-first century.

Our country is taking an active part in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), which will take place in 1996 in Istanbul.

Thus despite the objective and subjective difficulties encountered by my country, Azerbaijan, during the past year has been taking decisive action to integrate itself fully into the world community. We are convinced that integration into the world's political, economic and humanitarian process is possible only by increasing cooperation between States at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Our country shares the general conviction regarding the need to reduce the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction and subsequently to destroy them, has acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and is taking an active part in the preparatory work for the Review Conference that will take place in 1995. Azerbaijan supports the indefinite extension of that Treaty and believes that it should be made universal. We are convinced that the non-proliferation Treaty is an instrument that strengthens all international efforts and regional initiatives that seek to prevent any proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to eliminate obstacles that threaten international and regional peace and security.

In this connection we welcome the positive steps taken recently in the area of disarmament, including the adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which was signed by Azerbaijan and the majority of countries of the world.

One outstanding example of our progress towards building a democratic, lawful State was Azerbaijan's accession to the basic instruments of international law in the area of human rights, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, and some others. Our country is very interested in the various initiatives being taken in the area of protecting human

rights. The idea of establishing, within the United Nations system, a new post of high commissioner for human rights, reflects an intention to enhance international cooperation in this area. We are prepared actively to participate in the discussions on this question.

Another pressing issue, one that requires urgent and constant attention, is that of refugees and displaced persons. It is time for the international community to draw up proper rules and standards to govern massive, forced migrations which could help overcome their main causes and consequences.

Desirous of making a worthy contribution to the various areas of the activities of the United Nations, Azerbaijan submitted its candidacy for, and was elected to, the Commission on Human Settlements and the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development. We are convinced that the great scientific potential and practical experience of our specialists will help these commissions to do effective work.

In 1995 the United Nations will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. In the almost five decades that have elapsed since the United Nations was created, its historic meaning and universality have become strikingly clear. Today it is time for serious, meaningful changes, changes commensurate with the needs of our rapidly changing world. We believe that, given the new context of international relations, the restructuring of the United Nations, and particularly of the Security Council, must meet the great expectations of Member States. Expansion of the membership of the Security Council, the need for which is the subject of serious discussion, should help the Council continue effectively to discharge its primary task, that of the maintenance of international peace and security. Of course the role and responsibility of the Secretary-General will shift towards enhanced peacemaking and diplomatic activity.

In conclusion, we look to the future with optimism, to a future where peace and cooperation will prosper. We call upon States Members of the United Nations to make every effort to promote the establishment of a safe, secure, common home. We are sure that constructive discussions and debates at this session will make an important contribution to the building of a better world in the coming century.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I call on the representative of Albania, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and five for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. DUMI (Albania): I regret having to speak again in exercise of the right of reply, but, the statement made last week by the representative of the republic of Greece, in exercise of his right of reply, requires the following clarifications.

The representative of Greece called on the Republic of Albania to respect the right of national minorities in the same way as Greece does. As a country newly emerged from dictatorship, Albania has much to learn and to put into practice as it progresses towards application of the most advanced European common values. Indeed, it is doing so. However, although we gave a friendly welcome to the Greek suggestion, I must point out that my country is not prepared to adopt the Greek practice: denial of the existence of the national minorities within its borders.

It is well known that there are several ethnic minority groups living in Greece, arbitrarily unrecognized and persecuted by the Greek authorities. I shall just focus on an important large one - tens of thousands of Muslim Albanians living in Chamiria. Beginning about 50 years ago, they have been subjected to forced deportation to Albania and Turkey, forced to leave their ancestral land and abandon their property. Moreover, for many decades the Orthodox Chami people and the old Albanian community in Greece, known as Arvanitei, have been subjected to different assimilation practices. They are denied all rights - even the most fundamental human right: the right to declare and develop their national identity. Their rights, as provided for in international law, must be restored and scrupulously respected.

This question should be considered in parallel with that of the rights of the Greek minority in Albania, since the principle of reciprocity applies equally to all States and nations. We have already presented our views to the Greek authorities. Albania will continue to work, bilaterally and multilaterally, on this issue, and we are confident that common language can and will be found.

Dialogue and understanding must prevail in dealing with issues concerning the treatment of minorities. To this

end, Albania has shown good will and a constructive spirit. However, the use of pressure and of related tactics, such as the Greek authorities' recent forced expulsion and ill-treatment of more than 20,000 Albanian migrants, is not the way to solve these problems, nor is it in accordance with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process.

As regards the Greek allegation, that the Albanian Mission misrepresented

> "the content of a letter ... by the CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities", *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 19th meeting)*

Mr. van der Stoel's report is realistic and objective and exposes as artificial the noise made by Greece about the situation of the Greek minority in Albania.

Finally, I am authorized to reiterate the statement made here by Albania's Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the Albanian democratic Government

> "is determined to build a modern State and a civilized society, based on respect for the human rights of all strata of the population without exception or discrimination." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 5th meeting*)

No doubt this will be made a reality through deeds rather than words, but, as an old saying goes, Babylon was not built overnight.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.